

National Energy Technology Laboratory

P 243.2-1

DATE: 3/28/02

TITLE: RECORDS MANAGEMENT

1. PURPOSE: To provide instructions on how NETL records shall be identified, reviewed, and prepared for proper retention or disposal.
2. CANCELLATION: This Procedure replaces all documents created prior to the formation of NETL that pertain to the tracking and maintenance of records management.
3. REFERENCES: The references listed below provide additional clarifications and/or requirements for the Records Management Program.
 - a. DOE Order 200.1, Information Management Program, of 9/30/96.
 - b. NETL Order 243.2, Records Management Program, current version.
 - c. NETL Procedure 243.1-1, ES&H Record Identification and Retention, of 8/3/01.
 - d. NETL Procedure 243.2-2, Records Inventory, current version.
 - e. NETL Procedure 243.2-3, Records Disposition, current version.
 - f. NETL Procedure 243.2-4, Electronic Records, current version.
 - g. NETL Procedure 243.2-5, Filing System, current version.
 - h. Title 36 CFR, Chapter 12, Subchapter B, "Records Management."
 - i. Title 44 U.S.C., Chapter 21, "National Archives and Records Administration."

DISTRIBUTION: As Required
NO. OF PAGES: 13

INITIATED BY: Office of Business
and Logistics

- j. Title 44 U.S.C., Chapter 29, "Records Management by the Archivist of the United States and the Administrator of General Services."
- k. Title 44 U.S.C., Chapter 31, "Records Management by Federal Agencies."
- l. Title 44 U.S.C., Chapter 33, "Disposal of Records."
- m. NARA-approved DOE Administrative, Programmatic, and Site-Specific Records Disposition Schedules.

4. DEFINITIONS:

- a. Active Records -- Records necessary to conduct the current business of NETL and therefore are generally maintained in office space and equipment.
- b. Adequate and Proper Documentation -- A record of the conduct of Government business that is complete and accurate to the extent required to document organization, functions, policies, decisions, procedures, and essential transactions and is designed to furnish the information necessary to protect the legal and financial rights of the Government and of persons directly affected by Government activities.
- c. AudioVisual Records -- Records in pictorial or aural form. Include still and motion pictures; graphic materials, such as posters and original art; audio and video recordings; and combinations of media, such as slide-tape productions.
- d. Case Files -- Records, regardless of media, documenting a specific action, event, person, place, project, or other matter. Includes personnel, project, and transaction files, which are types of case files.
- e. Closed Files -- A file unit or series containing documents on which action has been completed and to which more documents are not likely to be added.
- f. Contingent Records -- Records scheduled for final disposition at an unspecified future time to occur after a particular event, such as the decommissioning of a vessel, the sale of property, or the destruction of a building.
- g. Correspondence Records -- Letters, postcards, memorandums, notes, telecommunications, and any other form of addressed, written communication that are sent and received. These

records are arranged and filed according to their general informational or subject content. Includes mainly letters and memorandums but also forms, reports, and other material, all relating to program and administrative functions, not to specific cases.

- h. Custody -- Guardianship or control of records, including both physical possession (physical custody) and legal responsibility (legal custody), unless one or the other is specified.
- i. Cutoff -- Breaking or ending files at regular intervals, usually at the close of a fiscal or calendar year, to permit their disposal or transfer in complete blocks and, for correspondence files, to permit the establishment of new files. Case files are generally cut off at the end of the year in which the case is closed.
- j. Department of Energy Records Schedule (DOERS) -- A records schedule issued by the Department of Energy.
- k. Disposition -- The actions taken when records are no longer needed in current office space. These include transfer to agency storage facilities or Federal record centers, transfer from one Federal agency to another, transfer of permanent records to the National Archives, and disposal of temporary records. Disposition is the third stage of the records life cycle.
- l. Document -- Recorded information regardless of physical form or characteristics. Often used interchangeably with record.
- m. Electronic Records -- Information meeting the definition of a record and stored in a form that only a computer can process. Also called machine-readable records or ADP records.
- n. Emergency Operating Records -- That type of vital records essential to the continued functioning or reconstitution of a NETL organization during and after an emergency.
- o. Environment, Safety & Health (ES&H) -- Records containing environmental, safety and health information related to NETL operations.
- p. Federal Records Center (FRC) -- A records storage facility operated by the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) for storage and servicing noncurrent records.

- q. File Plan -- A plan designating the physical locations at which NETL's records, including ES&H files, are to be maintained, the specific types of files to be maintained there, and the organizational element having custodial responsibility.
- r. Frozen Records -- Those temporary records that cannot be destroyed on schedule because special circumstances (such as a court order or an investigation) require a temporary extension of the approved retention period.
- s. General Correspondence -- Records arranged and filed according to their general informational, or subject, content. Includes mainly letters and memorandums, but also forms, reports, and other material, all relating to program and administrative functions, not to specific cases.
- t. General Records Schedule (GRS) -- Created by the National Archives and applicable to records common to agencies throughout the Government.
- u. Inactive Records -- Those no longer required to conduct agency business and therefore are ready for final disposition. Now also called "Noncurrent Records."
- v. National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) -- An independent agency that succeeded the National Archives Records Service. It is responsible for establishing policies and procedures for managing the records of the Federal Government. It exercises final authority for approving the disposition of Government records.
- w. Nonrecord Material -- Nonrecord materials are those classes of documentary or other materials which may be disposed of without archival materials.
- x. Permanent Records -- Records appraised by NARA as having sufficient historical or other value to warrant continued preservation by the Federal Government beyond the time they are needed for administrative, legal, or fiscal purposes.
- y. Recordkeeping -- The act or process of creating and maintaining records. Assumes the need for their proper disposition.
- z. Recordkeeping Requirements -- Statements in statutes, regulations, or agency directives providing general and specific guidance on particular records to be created and maintained by NETL. Since NETL is legally obligated to create and

maintain adequate and proper documentation of its organization, functions, and activities, it needs to issue recordkeeping requirements for all activities at all levels and for all media, and to distinguish records from nonrecord materials and personal papers.

- aa. Record(s) -- Includes all books, papers, maps, photographs, machine-readable materials, or other documentary materials, regardless of physical form or characteristics, made or received by NETL under Federal law or in connection with the transaction of public business and preserved or appropriate for preservation by NETL or its legitimate successor as evidence of the organization, functions, policies, decisions, procedures, operations, or other activities of the Government or because of the informational value of data in them.
- bb. Records Custodian -- The contracted individuals responsible for daily maintenance and operation of the Record Centers.
- cc. Records Facility -- A local low-cost records storage facility for the economical storage of noncurrent records pending their destruction or transfer to a Federal Records Center.
- dd. Records Management -- Records management is the planning, budgeting, organizing, directing, training, and control involved in managing the life cycle of records. This life cycle encompasses the interrelated and interdependent phases of records creation or collection, records maintenance and use, and records disposition.
- ee. Records Management Program -- A planned, coordinated set of policies, procedures, and activities needed to manage NETL's recorded information. Encompasses the creation, maintenance and use, and disposition of records, regardless of media. Essential elements include issuing up-to-date program directives, properly training those responsible for implementation, publicizing the program, and carefully evaluating the results to ensure adequacy, effectiveness, and efficiency.
- ff. Records Officer -- The Records Officer is the person responsible for implementation of the NETL Records Management Program.
- gg. Special Records -- Types of records maintained separately from textual/paper records because their physical form or characteristics require unusual care and/or because they

have nonstandard sizes. Includes electronic, audiovisual, microform, cartographic and remote-sensing imagery, architectural and engineering, printed, and card records.

- hh. Vital Records -- Records essential to the continued functioning or reconstitution of NETL during and after an emergency and also those records essential to protecting the rights and interests of that organization and of the individuals directly affected by its activities. Includes both emergency operating and rights-and-interests records. Vital Record considerations are part of NETL's Records Disaster Prevention and Recovery Program.

5. QUALITY CONTROL:

- a. Paper Files -- Documents held in file cabinets shall be inspected annually by the record custodians. The inspection shall include an assessment of the physical condition of the records as well as the conformance to the appropriate record schedules.
- b. Electronic Documents -- Hard (paper) copies of electronic records shall be inspected as received by the records custodian to ensure that all required transmission and receipt data is included with a record copy.
- c. Retired (Boxed) Paper Documents -- Hard copies of retired paper documents kept in boxes shall be reviewed annually by the Records personnel to assure they continue to be in acceptable physical condition and to assess conformance with the appropriate record schedules.
- d. Other Media -- Copies of other records, including books, maps, photographs, film, machine-readable materials, magnetic tape, or other documentary materials shall be inspected annually by the Record custodians, to assure they continue to be in acceptable physical condition and are in conformance with the appropriate record schedules.
- e. Records Officer -- The Records Officer shall periodically monitor NETL's record identification and retention activities in procedure to assure that this Procedure is being followed. In addition, the Records Officer shall periodically (but at least annually) review this Procedure and recommend revisions as necessary to cover changing site conditions or regulatory requirements.

- f. Vital Records -- In accordance with 36 CFR, Part 1236 and Subpart B, Management of Records and Vital Records, a program for the identification and protection of vital records shall be in place. Backup copies of vital records and other electronic records shall be created with regularity and maintained off site. Random sampling shall be done to the reliability of backup copies. Additionally, the vital records will be tested during periodic disaster recovery drills.

6. RESPONSIBILITIES:

- a. The NETL Director shall:
 - (1) Have overall responsibility for ensuring that the Records Management Program is administered in accordance with the requirements of all Federal laws and regulations, Executive Orders, DOE Orders, DOE Manuals, DOE Standards, accepted external standards, and authoritative issuances.
 - (2) Ensure implementation of this Procedure by conveying to both NETL management and to employees their responsibility for compliance with record management requirements.
- b. The Associate Director, Information Technology Division shall ensure that the Records Management Program is administered in accordance with the requirements of all Federal laws and regulations, Executive Orders, DOE Orders, DOE Manuals, DOE Standards, accepted external standards, and authoritative issuances.
- c. The Records Officer shall:
 - (1) Administer the Records Management Program in accordance with the requirements of all Federal laws and regulations, Executive Orders, DOE Orders, DOE Manuals, DOE Standards, accepted external standards, and authoritative issuances.
 - (2) Administer the implementation of this Procedure by conveying to both NETL management and to employees their responsibility for compliance with record management requirements.

- (3) Survey and appraise the Records Management Program (including site support contractors) and recommend necessary records management improvements.
- (4) Serve as the NETL point of contact for Records Management Program issues.
- (5) Assure that a periodic records inventory is conducted.
- (6) Prepare records holding reports and submit to DOE Headquarters, when requested.
- (7) Oversees operations of the NETL Records Facility for the storage of inactive records.
- (8) Reviews inventory records periodically with the Records personnel to ensure proper disposition of records qualifying for disposal.
- (9) Reviews inventory records periodically with the Records personnel to ensure proper disposition of records qualifying for disposal.

d. Records Personnel shall:

- (1) Assist Records Officer with administering the Records Management Program in accordance with the requirements of all Federal laws and regulations, Executive Orders, DOE Orders, DOE Manuals, DOE Standards, accepted external standards, and authoritative issuances.
- (2) Assist with conducting appropriate records training.
- (3) Assist with site-wide records inventories.
- (4) Review completed inventory and appraisal recordation and determine proper disposition of items described.
- (5) Ensure only "record" material is being transferred to the NETL Records Facility.

e. The Contracting Officials shall:

- (1) Ensure all site support contracts include requirements for compliance with this Procedure.

- (2) Ensure the appropriate records are identified as contract deliverables, including records pertaining to the environment, safety, and health; financial and technical records; and other specified records as appropriate to the contract scope.
 - (3) Ensure records identified as contract deliverables are handled in accordance with the requirements of this Procedure and other relevant procedures, laws, and regulations and delivered to NETL at appropriate intervals, per the contracts, or at the termination of the contract.
- f. The Project Manager shall provide project records to the records holding area designated for storage and maintenance of project technical and procurement files.
- g. The NEPA Compliance Office shall establish a central storage area for segregated storage of all NEPA records in coordination with the Records Officer.
- h. The File Custodians shall:
 - (1) Establish and maintain file stations within their organizational units.
 - (2) Evaluate records maintained in assigned area and identify records and nonrecords.
 - (3) Complete inventory and appraisal recommendations.
- i. The NETL Employees shall comply with the Records Management Program in accordance with this Procedure.

7. TRAINING REQUIREMENTS:

- a. NETL employees shall periodically (but at least every 2 years) complete Records Management Awareness Training.
- b. Personnel involved in the inventory and disposition of records shall be fully trained in the handling of records by the records personnel.
- c. Upon acceptance of an assignment that entails file/record responsibilities, employees are required to read this Procedure (and any subsequent revision) and be aware of its contents and directions.

- d. Records awareness will be promoted in various training, newsletter articles, Records homepage, strategic poster placement, etc.

8. DOCUMENT CONTROL:

- a. The Records Officer shall review and update this Procedure as necessary to accommodate changing conditions at NETL and to ensure compliance with applicable laws, regulations, and DOE requirements.
- b. The Records Officer shall ensure that NETL records are properly retained or disposed of in accordance with this Procedure and other DOE and Federal recordkeeping requirements.
- c. The Records personnel shall assure that all requests are reviewed for records disposition and ensure that responsible personnel receive a copy of the form after location assignment.
- d. A records database of pertinent information from the records disposition forms will be maintained by the Records Personnel. A complete file of all documentation regarding record forwarded to the FRC will be maintained by the Records personnel.
- e. The Records Personnel shall maintain authorizations for disposal of records whose required retention time has expired.

9. PROCEDURE: The following procedures apply to all NETL records. Records must go through the following steps as they enter the records program:

a. Inventory

- (1) A site-wide inventory will be conducted periodically (at least every 3 years) to reduce the amount of file cabinet space taken by noncurrent records. Based on NETL's organizational structure, a file custodian from each area will assist the Records personnel in evaluating the records maintained in that area.
- (2) Records and nonrecords that are identified will go through an appraisal process. Records will be placed into categories based on their type and value (administrative, financial, legal, scientific, research, and historical) to the Government, or to the public.

Areas of concern to be emphasized will be duplication, copies, need for centralization, records without schedules, records that are scheduled inaccurately, etc.

- (3) The completed inventory and appraisal recommendations will be reviewed by the Records personnel who will determine the proper action to be taken on any weakness found during the inventory. The Records personnel will then return to the offices and work with the Records custodian to correct any inconsistencies.

The inventory includes the following:

- (a) Record and nonrecord material.
- (b) Controlled and unclassified papers.
- (c) Machine-readable and microfilm material.
- (d) Audiovisual records.
- (e) Filing series and correspondence files.
- (f) Permanent, as well as temporary, records.
- (g) Reference materials (pamphlets, reports, handbooks, reading files, and extra copy files) maintained in files.

- b. Appraisal of File Series -- Following the inventory, the records are appraised. Appraisal involves placing all file series into categories based on their type and value (administrative, financial, legal, scientific, research, and historical) to the Government or to the public. The appraisal process is a joint effort between the offices involved and the Records personnel.
- c. Scheduling Records -- The completed inventory and appraisal recommendations are reviewed by the Records personnel who will determine the proper disposition of the items described. These items will fall into the following three categories:
 - (1) Record items covered by General Records Schedule (GRS) or by the Department of Energy Records Schedules (DOERS).

(2) Nonrecord items.

(3) Record items not covered by records schedules.

The GRS and DOERS shall be used to assign a scheduled retention period. If clarification of standards for schedules is needed, the Records Officer shall be contacted.

When the document is not covered in the GRS or DOERS, a new schedule is to be requested for the record series through use of Standard Form 115, Request for Records Disposition Authority. Individuals requesting new schedules will contact the Records personnel for assistance.

Short retention periods (usually 1 year or less) shall be assigned to nonrecord items since they are usually duplicated elsewhere in the organization, and are retained for convenience of reference only. If the determination of nonrecord is based on physical duplication, the responsible office for keeping the record copy shall be noted on the inventory.

d. Retirement -- NETL will create/implement a retirement process that is most cost efficient and most beneficial to the customer.

(1) Only records that are appropriate will enter the records storage area.

(2) All records will be prepared according to FRC requirements in the events that they are to be forwarded there, they are ready to go and there is no need for re-work.

(3) Records identified as inactive will be packed in standard Federal records retention boxes and form NETL F 243.1-1 is to be completed for each box.

(4) A member of the Records personnel will review the contents of the box and provide guidance on appropriate retention periods and schedule use prior to acceptance into the Records Facility.

(5) Records personnel will assign a box number, a retention period to the box, and enter pertinent information from the box, such as location, owner, content, etc., into the records database.

- e. Storage -- All records will be shipped to the Pittsburgh records storage area.
- f. Disposition -- The owner or custodian of a records box remains the owner until final disposition. In the event that the original owner/custodian leaves his or her position before final disposition, the records materials will be transferred to a new owner who has knowledge of the material. Only owners who have the knowledge of the contents of a records box can give final approval of disposition. At the end of the assigned retention period, owners will be contacted to verify disposal authority for the records. Owners will be given 30 days to reassess the retention period, reclaim the box, or approve disposition. A lack of response from the owner by the end of this time period will be forwarded to the Records Officer to determine final approval of disposition.

Approved:

Associate Director, OBL

NETL Directives Coordinator